

Date: May 17, 2011

To: Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager
Through: Theodore L. Voorhees, Deputy City Manager
Mark D. Ahrendsen, Director of Transportation

From: Harmon E. Crutchfield, Assistant Director of Transportation

Subject: Decision Process for Durham Transit Services Changes

Executive Summary

To improve the efficiency and effectiveness by which transit services are provided in Durham, the City Council on June 21, 2010 approved a Contract for Operation of Durham Transit Services with Triangle Transit (TTA).

In accordance with this contract, TTA is responsible for the oversight of the day to day management of Durham transit services. As part of the agreement with TTA, the City Council rescinded the Durham Area Transit Authority (DATA) Board Member appointments. As a result, TTA and the City have assumed many of the responsibilities and duties formerly provided by the DATA Board, including monthly public meeting at the Durham Station and the development of policies and procedures associated with transit service changes.

The contract between the City and TTA authorizes TTA to make minor service changes within the constraints of the approved budget. TTA may also make recommendations to the City for more significant service changes that would be subject to the approval of the City. Accordingly, a process by which changes to Durham transit services are approved has been developed and is provided as Attachment.

Recommendation

The Transportation Department recommends that the City Council approve the attached Durham Transit Service Change Approval Process.

Background

On June 21, 2010, the City Council approved a Contract for Operation of Durham Transit Services with TTA. As a result of this contract and other actions by City Council, the following is effective: (1) TTA is responsible for the contracting and managing of third party providers for Durham transit services and for transit planning and marketing services; (2) TTA is responsible for day-to-day management of Durham transit services; (3) the City of Durham is responsible for providing the funds necessary to support the transit services and for providing necessary transit vehicles and facilities; and (4) the Durham Area Transit Authority Board Member appointments are rescinded.

Since the approval of the contract with TTA, TTA and the City have developed a recommended process for approving changes to Durham transit services. A copy of this process is attached.

Issue/Analysis

TTA is responsible for managing and operating the Durham transit services and recommending changes to improve service efficiency and effectiveness and to increase ridership and improve customer satisfaction. TTA is also responsible for developing a recommended operating budget for transit services which will be subject to approval by the City. TTA has contracted with First Transit to be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Durham transit services.

The City is financially responsible for the costs associated with operating the transit services. The City continues to be the recipient of federal and state transit funding. The City also continues to own the transit vehicles and facilities and will make the resources available to TTA to use in the provision of Durham transit services. In addition, the City is responsible for approving changes in Durham transit services. Different levels of service changes will have varying ranges of impacts. To ensure that an appropriate opportunity for input from the public and other stakeholders has been provided before transit service changes are approved and implemented, the attached process has been developed.

Alternatives

1. Approve the attached Durham Transit Service Change Approval Process
2. Modify and approve the attached Durham Transit Service Change Approval Process.

Financial Impact

Under the terms of the original Contract and the attached Amendment One, the City will continue to be responsible for all costs associated with operating the Durham transit system. The City will reimburse Triangle Transit monthly for all costs incurred for the management and operation of the transit services. Any financial efficiency identified and recommended by TTA will benefit the overall cost of operations through reduced cost of services or will enhance services provided by DATA.

SDBE Summary

This item does not require review by the Equal Opportunity/Equity Assurance Department.

Attachments

Durham Transit Service Change Approval Process